

**TESTIMONY OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE
BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON INLAND
FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE
IN OPPOSITION TO
L.D. 668**

“An Act to Market Maine’s Hunting and Fishing Opportunities”

SPONSORED BY: Representative DUCHESNE of Hudson

CO-SPONSORED BY: Senator CYRWAY of Kennebec and Representatives ALLEY of Beals, DUNPHY of Old Town, HILLIARD of Belgrade, MARTIN of Sinclair, and Senator DUTREMBLE of York

DATE OF HEARING: April 28, 2015

Good afternoon Senator Davis, Representative Shaw and members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee. I am Christl Theriault, Assistant to the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife speaking on behalf of the Department, in opposition to **L.D. 668**.

This bill aims to direct the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife to establish a comprehensive marketing plan for the Department that would be directed and coordinated by a dedicated marketing specialist within the Division of Public Information and Education.

The Department is currently reviewing proposals from a number of vendors and is expecting to award a contract in the next few weeks to develop a communications, marketing and public relations plan that will be delivered by November 2015. The plan will be implemented by a committee of Department staff with representation from each Bureau and Division within the Agency. The plan will serve as a road map for the Department to *identify the needs of the public and our customers* in order to develop a marketing strategy as well as new programs and initiatives that meet those needs.

Currently, the Division of Information and Education partners with the Department of Economic and Community Development, Office of Tourism to attend a number of hunting, fishing and outdoor related trade shows throughout the Northeast. Additionally, the two Departments have worked collaboratively on the development of the Maine Hunting and Fishing Map as well as the recently completed Statewide and Regional Analysis of Participation and Economic Contributions of Hunting and Fishing.

Through educational programming and the development of hunting brochures, the Fishing Opportunities in Maine booklet, as well as numerous other publications, the Department continues to recruit and provide information to hunters and anglers. The Department also puts out information on a regular basis through a number of successful social media channels, GovDelivery email distribution, blogs and in press releases.

As you can see many of the initiatives outlined in this bill are already being done by the Department.

I would be glad to answer any questions at this time or during the work session.